

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-13 (Cancelled)

14. (New) A method of constructing a *Schizosaccharomyces pombe* yeast cell which produces a heterologous protein, comprising

deleting or inactivating at least one gene encoding at least one enzyme selected from the group consisting of pyruvate decarboxylase, aspartic protease, serine protease, aminopeptidase, and carboxypeptidase, and

transforming the *Schizosaccharomyces pombe* yeast cell with a polynucleotide which encodes the heterologous protein,

wherein the deletion or inactivation of the at least one gene results in increased production of the heterologous protein compared to a *Schizosaccharomyces pombe* yeast cell in which the at least one gene has not been deleted or inactivated.

15. (New) The method of Claim 14, wherein the at least one enzyme is a pyruvate decarboxylase.

16. (New) The method of Claim 14, wherein the at least one enzyme is an aspartic protease.

17. (New) The method of Claim 14, wherein the at least one enzyme is a serine protease.

18. (New) The method of Claim 14, wherein the at least one enzyme is an aminopeptidase.

19. (New) The method of Claim 14, wherein the at least one enzyme is a carboxypeptidase.

20. (New) A method of producing a heterologous protein, comprising constructing a *Schizosaccharomyces pombe* yeast cell which produces a heterologous protein by deleting or inactivating at least one gene encoding at least one enzyme selected from the group consisting of pyruvate decarboxylase, aspartic protease, serine protease, aminopeptidase, and carboxypeptidase, and

transforming the *Schizosaccharomyces pombe* yeast cell with a polynucleotide which encodes the heterologous protein,

wherein the deletion or inactivation of the at least one gene results in increased production of the heterologous protein compared to a *Schizosaccharomyces pombe* yeast cell in which the at least one gene has not been deleted or inactivated;

culturing the yeast cell constructed such that the heterologous protein is produced by the yeast cell; and collecting the heterologous protein.

21. (New) The method of Claim 20, wherein the at least one enzyme is a pyruvate decarboxylase.

22. (New) The method of Claim 20, wherein the at least one enzyme is an aspartic protease.

23. (New) The method of Claim 20, wherein the at least one enzyme is a serine protease.

24. (New) The method of Claim 20, wherein the at least one enzyme is an aminopeptidase.

25. (New) The method of Claim 20, wherein the at least one enzyme is a carboxypeptidase.